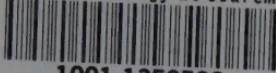


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A YEAR OF HYMN STORIES

A PRIMER OF HYMNOLOGY

BY CARL F. PRICE

THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN
NEW YORK CINCINNATI

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The Methodist Sunday School Hymnal

Issued under the Auspices of the
Board of Sunday Schools of the
Methodist Episcopal Church

Edited by

JOHN R. VAN PELT, Ph.D.

Assisted by a Committee from the Board and
Professor Peter C. Lutkin, Mus.Doc., Dean
of Northwestern University School of Music

THE following testimonies from schools now actually using the book conclusively prove its quality and its adaptability to schools of every type.

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TO NATHANIEL STEELMAN GOFF,
FOR TWENTY YEARS A FAITH-
FUL SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

Preface

THIS little book is presented as a primer of hymnology for the purpose of awakening among Sunday school scholars a greater interest in our hymns. It consists of a series of fifty-two hymn-stories, one for each Sabbath of the year, told in simple form without any attempt to give a critical history of the hymns. The writer is grateful to Professor Karl P. Harrington and the Rev. Dr. Charles S. Nutter for helpful suggestions in the preparation of these hymn-stories; and to Silas H. Paine for access to his manuscripts. Some of the stories have never before appeared in any book; others, already well-known, have been drawn from authoritative sources of hymnology. All of the hymns are to be found in the new Methodist Sunday School Hymnal, and the number in parenthesis following the first line of the hymn on each page of this book refers to the number of the hymn in that Hymnal.

Superintendents can profitably spend a few minutes each Sunday in telling the school the story of a hymn, preferably in their own words, adapting to the audience the material on the printed page, or reading it directly from this book. The story should be followed by the singing of the hymn. While the plan of this book follows a hypothetical calendar, the occasional hymns will be found not to fit the actual calendar of any year. Palm Sunday and Easter, for instance, are movable feasts, and even our fixed holidays, to which certain hymns refer, may fall nearer to some other Sabbath than the one herein designated. Then, too, Missionary Sunday sometimes falls on the fifth Sunday of the

month instead of the fourth; or else regularly on the first Sunday of the month. Therefore, the superintendent may use his own discretion in planning the course of hymn-stories to fit the calendar of his year, or to fulfill any other plan he may devise.

The teacher may find it helpful to tell these hymn-stories to his class, and thus to give incentive to each scholar to memorize the great hymns of the church. No one can ever measure the influence in after-life of a hymn once fastened in a child's memory. Many a sinful man has been brought back to God by a hymn, learned in childhood, forcing its message upon his conscience in some critical moment. Many a Christian has been steadied through temptation or sorrow by such a hymn. Let us not be derelict, therefore, in giving our Sunday school scholars the full benefit of our hymnodic heritage, that their lives may be enriched by the spirit of Christian song.

CARL F. PRICE.

New York City, October 1, 1914.

Introduction

HAPPILY the day of the irresponsible songbook is past. With the advent of the new Methodist Sunday School Hymnal there has broken upon us a new light. As we thumb its pages there dawns upon us the consciousness that at last the church has recognized the possibilities of song on the impressionable nature when life is young, and has adapted itself to utilize that method of spiritual conquest. The simple dignity inherent in its mechanical make-up allures the way to the rich fields that lie within its covers. It appears that scarcely anything of real value touching the needs of youth and maturity, that might be expected in such a book, has been ignored. The fullness of it is fountainlike—overflowing. The wonder is that, in the relatively small compass of less than three hundred hymns, it is so near completeness. Its themes are diverse, dealing with such structural truths as are essential in the making of character and the enrichment of life—the fact of God, God in Christ, personal experience, service, consolation, Scriptures, missions, great days in the church, such as Christmas and Easter, patriotism, and a long list of themes inter-linked indissolubly with the symmetry of the Christian life. It has a hymn for every heart—a message for every time of crisis—a melody for every emotion.

To anyone who has given any considerable thought to the effect of bright, sparkling, cheery songs upon childhood and youth, rather than those that are morbidly depressing, there will come a sense of deep satisfaction by glancing over the titles of

the hymns. Look at these luminous lines: "Come, let us join our cheerful songs," "Fairest Lord Jesus," "Now thank we all our God," "Singing for Jesus, our Saviour and King," "The joyful morn is breaking," "Hark! ten thousand harps and voices," "Joy, joy, immortal joy." All these and more are indicative of the radiant spirit that leaps up to meet the fresh, young soul as it timidly faces the mysteries of life.

Richly fraught as the Hymnal is of itself, its worth may well be emphasized. This is the happy conception that lies at the heart of *A Year of Hymn Stories*. To know the hymns in a crude, indifferent way is not enough; to sing them with no grasp of their great meaning still fails to reach the desired end; frequently more must be added—a ray of light, a touch of color, a flash of fire. What is better than to group around a hymn here and there an attractive cluster of illustrative material? *A Year of Hymn Stories* tends to fix in one's mind special hymns running through the year upon which the emphasis is placed; besides this—it is suggestive of the importance of the Hymnal in the school.

With some hint of prophetic vision the Methodist Sunday School Hymnal has been proclaimed a lasting triumph. Not too great is the challenge of its merit, for as a standard of hymnody it cannot be ignored. Its spiritual message, outbreathed from poetry of the finest lyric charm coupled with a certain high musical excellence, gives it the quality of permanence. It should become a fixed part of the Sunday school curriculum—a musical standard of religious instruction—an attractive aid in teaching the wonderful truths of that Kingdom where song itself shall have no end.

Derry, New Hampshire.

GEORGE W. FARMER.

First Sunday: New Year's

"Another year is dawning!" (263)
Frances Ridley Havergal, 1836-1879

Miss HAVERGAL, who wrote the famous New Year's hymn,

Another year is dawning!
Dear Master, let it be
In working or in waiting,
Another year with Thee,

spent her life "in working and in waiting" for the Master. In August, 1850, before she was fourteen years old, she entered Miss Teed's school, where the influences over her were very helpful. The following year, she says, "I committed my soul to the Saviour, and earth and heaven seemed brighter from that moment." She earnestly strove to make each year after that hallowed experience

Another year of service,
Of witness for Thy love.

Wherever she went in her frequent travels she was constantly asking people whether or not they knew the joys of salvation, and by thus being a witness she led hundreds of souls to the cross.

Another year of training
For holier work above.

Her heart was fixed upon the more glorious work, which God has prepared for us to accomplish in heaven. When, in 1878, she was taken seriously ill, and was told her life was in danger, she replied: "If I am really going, it is too good to be true!" "Splendid! To be so near the gates of heaven."

This hymn was written in 1874 and was first published as a New Year's card, later in collections of her own works, and finally in many hymn books. It has proved to be an inspiration to thousands standing at the threshold of a new year.

Second Sunday: Evangelistic

“Just as I am, without one plea” (125)

Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871

MANY unsaved souls imagine it is difficult to come to Christ. And this at first was the thought of Charlotte Elliott, the author of this hymn. Shortly after she became an invalid, with a helplessness lasting fifty years, Dr. Cæsar Milan visited her father and talked with her concerning her soul's salvation. At first she rudely resented this, but afterward repented and asked him how she might find the way to Christ. He replied: “Dear Charlotte, cut the cable. It will take too long to unloose it. Cut it. It is a small loss anyway. You must come to Christ just as you are.” And so, just as she was, she came and found the “peace that passeth all understanding,” enabling her to bear her illness with bravery.

Twelve years later, while everyone about her was busy preparing for a bazaar, she was burdened with the thought that as an invalid she was utterly useless herself, and brooded over this through the long hours of the night. But the next day her faith prevailed; and, remembering the words of Dr. Milan which brought about her conversion, she took her pen and wrote the wonderful hymn, beginning, “Just as I am, without one plea.” Later in the day Mrs. H. V. Elliott entered the room to tell her how the bazaar was progressing, and while there she read the hymn and took a copy of it. The great hymn was thus given to the world; and out of her helplessness Charlotte Elliott wrought a blessing to many souls that have been guided into salvation and wonderfully strengthened by her hymn.

Third Sunday: Evangelistic

“‘Almost persuaded,’ now to believe” (119)
Philip Bliss, 1838-1876

In the year A. D. 62 a certain Roman citizen was cast into prison because of a multitude of accusations against him. At his hearing before Festus he appealed to Cæsar for justice, and was held for trial at Rome. Shortly afterward he was asked to state his defense before King Agrippa and Bernice, who were then visiting Festus. That defense, uttered by Paul—for he was the accused prisoner—is found in the twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and is one of the greatest addresses to be found in the Holy Scriptures. At the conclusion King Agrippa said to Paul: “Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,” to which Paul replied, “I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.”

A clergyman by the name of Brundage was once preaching upon this subject and concluded his sermon with these solemn words:

“He who is almost persuaded is almost saved, but to be almost saved is to be entirely lost.” Philip Bliss was present and was so deeply impressed by these words that he wrote one of his most helpful hymns, based on the phrase “almost persuaded,” as a direct result of this sermon. During the Moody revivals many souls, almost persuaded, were helped by the appeal of this hymn to decide for Christ before it was too late.

Fourth Sunday: Missionary

"The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin" (120)
Philip Bliss, 1838-1876

DR. S. EARL TAYLOR, now missionary secretary of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has visited Christian missions around the world, and has had unusual opportunity to hear missionary hymns sung in many different lands. But rarely has he ever been so thrilled by hymn-singing, he declares, as during an eclipse of the sun in the Orient. In India the natives have a superstitious dread of an eclipse of the sun. They fear that the sun is being swallowed by a demon of some sort.

Once Dr. Taylor was in Calcutta during an eclipse of the sun. For days before that event he saw the city's streets crowded with pilgrims on their way to various sacred places, where they hoped to worship and bathe in the Hoogly River just below the Ganges during the time of the eclipse, expecting thereby to ward off evil. When at last the fateful hour of darkness arrived hundreds of thousands of natives thronged the sacred waters, terrorized by the eclipse and making a great clamor because they feared that a great power of evil in the form of a snake was about to swallow the sun-god. As Dr. Taylor, looking from the Y. M. C. A. Building on the heights above, witnessed this terrible evidence of heathenish superstition, he heard a group of native Christians singing in their meeting:

"The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin;
The Light of the world is Jesus."

The effect was thrilling! For India's spiritual darkness is due solely to the eclipse of Jesus, the Light of the world, made by heathenism in the hearts of her benighted millions.

Fifth Sunday

"Blest be the tie that binds" (118)

John Fawcett, 1739-1817

THE Rev. Dr. John Fawcett, pastor of the Baptist church in Wainsgate, Yorkshire, had accepted a call to a London church and had preached his farewell sermon, when the tender devotion of his parishioners compelled him to sacrifice his larger ambitions for a career in London, and he remained with them until his death. As a result of this experience he wrote the hymn, "Blest be the tie that binds."

A pale young man was once teacher of a class of unruly girls in D. L. Moody's Sunday school. One day he tottered into Mr. Moody's store, pale and bloodless, and exclaimed: "I have been bleeding at the lungs, and they have given me up to die. I must go away at once." "But you are not afraid to die?" asked Mr. Moody. "No," he replied, "but I must soon stand before God and give an account of my stewardship, and not one of my Sunday school scholars has been brought to Christ."

Immediately he called on all the scholars, appealing to them to accept Christ; and for ten days he worked and prayed with them as never before until each member of the class was saved. On the night when he left for the distant place, where he finally died, says Mr. Moody, "we held a true love feast. It was the very gate of heaven—that meeting." He prayed and they prayed, and then with streaming eyes they sang:

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

Bidding each farewell at the train, the dying man whispered that he would meet them all in heaven.

Sixth Sunday

"Be not dismayed whate'er betide,
God will take care of you" (168)

C. D. Martin

A BLIND man was seen crossing the street at a dangerous place in the Bronx, New York city. A friend nearby overheard him singing softly, "God will take care of you," and asked, "Why are you singing that hymn?" He replied: "Because I must cross this dangerous street, and maybe one of the many wagons might strike me and I might get killed. But the thought came to me that, even if it did occur, my soul would go straight to God. And if he led me across all right, it would be just another evidence of his care of me. So I could not help singing to myself, 'God will take care of you.' Hallelujah!"

A little Sunday school girl once told her mother she was never afraid to pass through a certain dark hallway leading to their home, "because," she explained, "I simply sing, 'God will take care of you,' and I always come through safely."

This hymn was sung at each session of the State Christian Endeavor Convention, Altoona, Pennsylvania, in 1910. At the close of one of the sessions a man, touched by the song, inquired after salvation. A little later some delegates, while singing this song at their hotel, noticed several men at the door of a nearby barroom attracted by the singing. One had a glass of beer in his hand, which he quietly poured into the gutter leading to the street before the strains of the song were finished.

Seventh Sunday: Washington's Birthday

"O beautiful for spacious skies" (279)

Katharine Lee Bates, 1859-

MISS KATHARINE LEE BATES, professor of English Literature in Wellesley College, is the author of this hymn. She wrote it in 1893 while on a Western tour that brought her first to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The patriotic impressions made upon her mind by the wonderful White City she bore westward with her as she journeyed to Colorado; and when at last she stood on the summit of Pike's Peak and beheld the far-spreading panorama below and the spacious skies above, her soul was stirred by the thought of the greatness and the God-given destiny of America. These lines were set ringing in her heart, and into a noble poem she has woven the beauties of that mountain-top vision:

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!

Each verse is crowned with a prayer that to the physical beauty of her native land God may add the highest moral beauty:

America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

Horatio Parker, one of the greatest of contemporary American composers, wrote the music, "America the Beautiful," to which this hymn is set; though it is frequently sung, and most effectively, to the tune "Materna" (see No. 258).

Eighth Sunday: Missionary

"Fling out the banner! let it float" (244)

George Washington Doane, 1799-1859

GEORGE WASHINGTON DOANE, once Protestant Episcopal Bishop of New Jersey, was born the same year in which General George Washington died—1799. His life, which spanned the years until 1872, was filled with remarkable activity. He graduated at Union College in 1818, began his ministry at Trinity Church, New York, was a professor in Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, and later rector of Trinity Church, Boston, when he was elected to be Bishop of New Jersey.

Five years after he became bishop, he founded on the banks of the Delaware River at Burlington, New Jersey, a Protestant Episcopalian school for girls, known as Saint Mary's Hall, about which the best traditions of the Diocese of New Jersey have centered. The Bishop took the liveliest interest in the school, and watched over the destiny of his educational child with fatherly anxiety.

His successor, Bishop John Scarborough, who inherited through his office this interest in the school, once told the writer how Bishop Doane came to write the famous missionary hymn, "Fling out the banner!" In 1848 there was to be a flag-raising at Saint Mary's Hall, and the girls of the school appealed to Bishop Doane to write a song for them to sing on that occasion. The result was the writing of this hymn, which was sung for the first time by the young ladies of the seminary, and has been sung at thousands of missionary meetings since then, to the spiritual stimulation of many souls.

Ninth Sunday

“Glory be to the Father” (282)

ONE of the most universally accepted forms of worship among Protestants, who would praise the Triune God in song, is the ancient “Gloria Patri.” This is, strictly within the meaning of the term, a doxology, for a doxology is an alleluia or other expression of praise to the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity. “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost” expresses the fundamental doctrine of the Apostles’ Creed, and at the same time utters worshipful praise to God.

The story of the exact origin of the “Gloria Patri” is not known, though it is thought by many hymnologists to have come to us from the apostolic age. The coming of Christ as a babe in Bethlehem was heralded by a hymn of the angels in the first Christmas gloria: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” After the Last Supper with the Saviour the apostles sang a hymn and went out, as it is recorded in the gospel. Hymn-singing was one of the peculiar customs of the early Christians observed by secular writers of that age. There is inspiration to us in the thought that the Christians of this day make such frequent use of the hymn to the Trinity, sung by Christians in the apostolic age.

It is said that on May 26, A. D. 735, when his death was approaching, The Venerable Bede, the most eminent sacred scholar of his age, asked his friends to carry him to that part of the room where he usually prayed; and there he sang the “Gloria Patri”; and when at last he had sung, “World without end, Amen,” his spirit fled to the land of eternal life.

Tenth Sunday

"I was a wandering sheep" (143)

Horatius Bonar, 1808-1889

THE Rev. Dr. Horatius Bonar, a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, was one of the founders of the Free Church of Scotland in 1843. He wrote a great many hymns that are widely used. In his hymn, "I was a wandering sheep," he has told the story of salvation in simple terms that a child can understand.

Dr. Long has written an account of the revival in a girls' school in Massachusetts, where many of the girls had shown a great indifference to religion. Among the girls who laughed at the meetings and their results was one by the name of Helen B—. They sought to interest her in attending the prayer meetings, but all they could do was to pray for her. One evening, however, they were surprised to see Helen enter the meeting with eyes downcast and face very pale. After a few hymns and prayers each one quoted some favorite hymn verses. When Helen's turn came there was a silence, and then she began:

"I was a wandering sheep,
I did not love the fold."

"Her voice was low but distinct; and every word, as she uttered it, thrilled the hearts of the listeners. She repeated one stanza after another of that beautiful hymn of Bonar's, and not an eye, save her own, was dry, as with sweet emphasis she pronounced the last lines:

"No more a wayward child,
I seek no more to roam."

That single hymn told all. The wandering sheep, the wayward child, had returned."

Eleventh Sunday

“Jesus, Lover of my soul” (167)

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

IN the Civil War of the sixties many drummer-boys had left school to join the army. One of them, named Tom, was called “the young deacon,” as he was a great favorite and was respected by the soldiers for his religious life. Both his widowed mother and his sister were dead, so he had gone to war. One day he told the chaplain he had had a dream the night before. In his sleep he was greeted home again by his mother and little sister. “How glad they were!” he said. “My mother pressed me to her heart. I didn’t seem to remember they were dead. O, sir, it was just as real as you are real now!” “Thank God, Tom,” replied the chaplain, “that you have such a mother, not really dead but in heaven, and that you are hoping through Christ to meet her again.”

The following day in frightful battle both armies swept over the same ground four times, and at night between the two armies lay many dead and wounded that neither dared approach. Tom was missing; but when the battle roar was over they recognized his voice singing, softly and beautifully, “Jesus, Lover of my soul.” When he had sung,

“Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me,”

the voice stopped and there was silence. In the morning the soldiers found Tom sitting on the ground and leaning against a stump—dead. But they knew that his “helpless soul” had found refuge with Jesus, the Lover of the soul.

Twelfth Sunday

"When I survey the wondrous cross" (86)

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

MATTHEW ARNOLD declared the greatest Christian hymn in the English language to be "When I survey the wondrous cross." At least it is admittedly the greatest hymn of a great hymn-writer, Isaac Watts, the father of modern English hymnody. He was the son of a deacon in the Independent Church, who had no sympathy with young Watts's custom of making rhymes and verses when a boy. At the age of eighteen Watts was one day ridiculing some of the poor hymns then sung in the churches, when his father said to him, sarcastically, "Make some yourself, then." Accordingly, Watts set himself to writing a hymn, and produced the lines beginning: "Behold the glories of the Lamb." That was the start of his eminent career as a hymn-writer.

He became a clergyman, but illness compelled him to give up the pastorate, and for thirty-six years he remained at the home of Sir Thomas Abbey at Theobaldo, continuing his hymn-writing, which had reached its highest expression in this hymn, based on Paul's words, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Once, after this hymn had been sung in the Church of Saint Edmund, London, Father Ignatius repeated to his congregation the last two lines of the hymn impressively—

"Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

And he added: "Well, I am surprised to hear you sing that. Do you know that altogether you put only fifteen shillings in the collection bag this morning?"

Thirteenth Sunday: Palm Sunday

“All glory, laud, and honor” (84)

Saint Theodulph, ? -821

SOME of our best hymns were originally written many centuries ago in the Latin language, and have been brought into our English hymnody by devout modern translators. In the year A. D. 820 Theodulph, the Bishop of Orleans, was imprisoned at Metz by King Louis, the Debonnaire, who was the son of Charlemagne. The Bishop had been falsely accused of disloyalty to his king, but he bore with patience his captivity and the ignominy brought upon him by suspicious gossipers.

While in prison his meditations were upon the King of kings, and, taking the beautiful story of Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem as his theme, he wrote a Palm Sunday hymn that has survived to the Christian Church these eleven hundred years :

All glory, laud, and honor to Thee, Redeemer, King,
To whom the lips of children made sweet hosannas ring.

Our translation was made by the Rev. Dr. John Mason Neale.

An ancient tradition has it that the Bishop trained a chorus within the cloisters to sing his hymn with beautiful effect; and once they were singing it thus while King Louis and his court were passing on their way to the Cathedral. So enchanted was the king by its beauty that he commanded that the Bishop be released from his prison at once. The following year he died; but his church canonized him because of his preeminent piety. And to-day he is known as “Saint Theodulph.”

Fourteenth Sunday: Easter Day

"The day of resurrection" (98)

John of Damascus, ? -780

EASTERTIDE brings a worldwide joy, and its coming is celebrated in many different ways. Dean Stanley once penned a description of an Easter celebration in the Greek Church in which the hymn, "The day of resurrection," was sung in the original Greek, as it was first written, and with all of its original beauty:

"As midnight approached, the Archbishop with his priests, accompanied by the king and queen, left the church and stationed themselves on the platform, which was raised considerably from the ground, so that they were distinctly seen by the people. . . . Suddenly a single report from a cannon announced that twelve o'clock had struck, and that Easter Day had begun. Then the old Archbishop, elevating the cross, exclaimed in a loud, exulting tone: '*Christos anesti.*' And instantly every single individual of all that host took up the cry, . . . with a shout, 'Christ is risen! Christ is risen!'

"At the same moment the impressive darkness was succeeded by a blaze of light from thousands of tapers. . . . Everywhere men clasped each other's hands and congratulated one another and embraced with countenances beaming with delight, as though to each one separately some wonderful happiness had been proclaimed; and so in truth it was. And all the while, rising above the mingling of many sounds, each one of which was a sound of gladness, the aged priests were distinctly heard chanting forth this glorious old 'hymn of victory' in tones so loud and clear that they seemed to have regained their youth to tell the world that Christ is risen from the dead."

Fifteenth Sunday

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!" (103)

Edward Perronet, 1726-1792

THE Rev. Edward Perronet was a most devout man, who had the courage of his convictions and was not afraid to suffer for what he thought to be right. He lived in the days of the Wesleys and was intimate with them, and the philanthropic Lady Huntingdon was his patroness for a time. But these friends he felt it necessary to surrender because he conscientiously differed with them on some points of belief. His immortal hymn, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," has proved a blessing to Protestants of all beliefs.

One of the most dramatic instances of its use was found in the experience of the Rev. E. P. Scott in India. His friends had urged him not to venture near a certain barbarous inland tribe, whom he wished to evangelize. But he went forward with high courage, never wavering in his duty, and trusting in God to protect him. When at last he reached their country among the hills, he came upon a company of these savages. Immediately they surrounded him, pointing their spears at him with threatening scowls. He had nothing in his hands but his violin; and so, closing his eyes, he began to play and sing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name." When at last he opened his eyes he expected to be killed instantly. But his life had been spared through the singing of the hymn. Their spears had dropped, and they received him first with curiosity and interest, and then later with eagerness, as he told them the gospel story and won their hearts to the will of Jesus Christ.

Sixteenth Sunday

"Stand up, stand up for Jesus!" (202)

George Duffield, Jr., 1818-1888

THE hymn, "Stand up, stand up for Jesus," was written during the great revival of 1858, that came to be known as "The Work of God in Philadelphia." It was based upon the dying words of the Rev. Dudley A. Tyng, one of the most active ministers in the revival. It is said that, when he preached on March 30, 1858, at the noonday prayer meeting in Jayne's Hall, five thousand men listened to his sermon from the text, "Go now, ye that are men, and serve the Lord," and that before the close of the meeting over a thousand expressed their purpose to become Christians.

A few days later at "Brookfield," not far from Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, he left his study for a moment and went out to the barn, where a mule was working, harnessed to a machine, shelling corn. When he patted the mule on the head, his sleeve caught in the cogs of the wheel and his arm was frightfully torn.

After a painful but short illness, death finally claimed him. As he was dying, his father asked him if he had any message for his fellow ministers in the revival. He replied, "Let us all stand up for Jesus." That message was borne to them along with the sorrowful news of his death. Dr. George Duffield, Jr., the following Sunday preached a memorial sermon on his late friend, Tyng, taking as his text Ephesians 6. 14; and he wrote this hymn, based upon Tyng's dying words, as a fitting climax to the thought of his sermon.

Seventeenth Sunday

"From Greenland's icy mountains" (249)

Reginald Heber, 1783-1826

BISHOP REGINALD HEBER, after years of longing for the spread of the gospel in India, crowned his career with a few years of most useful service as Bishop of Calcutta. He made extensive visitations among the struggling missions nearly a century ago and ordained the first Christian native, Christian David. At last he laid down his life, a victim of fever, as a result of his labors in that benighted land.

During the years of his life as rector of Hodnet, while longing for a career in India, he wrote many hymns, as well as other forms of literary productions, and won the respect and friendship of Milman, Southey, and other littérateurs.

One Saturday afternoon, the day before Whitsunday, 1819, he was at Wrexham Vicarage with his father-in-law, Dr. Shipley, Dean of Saint Asaph. Dr. Shipley was planning to preach on the following morning a sermon in aid of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and in the evening Reginald Heber was to begin a series of lectures in the same church. As they sat together with some friends the Dean asked him to write a hymn on a missionary theme to be sung at the morning service. After Heber had retired for a while he returned and the Dean asked him: "What have you written?" Heber in reply read the first three verses of "From Greenland's icy mountains." The Dean exclaimed that they were very satisfactory. "No, no," replied Heber, "the sense is not complete." And so he added one more verse—"Waft, waft, ye winds, His story"—and the whole hymn was sung the next morning at the service.

Eighteenth Sunday

"O Love that wilt not let me go" (189)
George Matheson, 1842-1906

DR. GEORGE MATHESON was one of the most beloved clergymen in the Church of Scotland. His writings were numerous and of a high order; but the marvel of it all is that he was able to accomplish so much without his sight, for from the age of fifteen he was totally blind. His hymn beginning, "O Love that wilt not let me go," was sung out of his blindness and gives evidence of the courage with which he bore his great affliction.

His own story of how he came to write the hymn is well worth quoting: "My hymn was composed in the manse of Innellan on the evening of June 6, 1882. I was at the time alone. It was the day of my sister's marriage, and the rest of the family were staying overnight in Glasgow. Something had happened to me, which was known only to myself; and which caused the most severe mental suffering. It was the quickest bit of work I ever did in my life. I had the impression rather of having it dictated to me by some inward voice than of working it out myself."

William T. Stead quotes this letter from a correspondent: "At a time of great spiritual darkness, when God, Christ, and heaven seemed to have gone out of my life, . . . I heard this hymn sung in a little country chapel. The first two lines haunted me for weeks, and at last brought light and comfort to my dark soul."

Nineteenth Sunday: Mothers' Day

"Now thank we all our God" (13)

Martin Rinkart, 1586-1649

THE Thirty Years' War in Germany from 1618 to 1648 devastated the land and inflicted incredible hardships on a long-suffering people. But the German Protestants remained true to their faith and bore their trials bravely for conscience' sake, at last winning honorable respite from their sufferings in the Peace of Westphalia, October 24, 1648.

Among the bravest of the sufferers from the war was the Rev. Martin Rinkart, who wrote the hymn originally in German, "Now thank we all our God." It is generally supposed that he wrote it as a *Te Deum* of praise because of the restoration of peace at the close of thirty years of horrible strife.

Catherine Winkworth, who translated this hymn into English, once wrote of him: "So great were Rinkart's own losses and charities that he had the utmost difficulty in finding bread and clothes for his children, and was forced to mortgage his future income for several years. Yet how little his spirit was broken by all these calamities is shown by this hymn and others that he wrote; some, indeed, speaking of his own country's sorrows, but all breathing the same spirit of unbounded trust and readiness to give thanks."

Rinkart was a skilled musician, as well as a poet; and, besides, he wrote seven dramas based upon the Restoration Period which were produced at the one hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. But he is best known to posterity through his hymns.

Twentieth Sunday: Ascension

"Golden harps are sounding" (100)

Frances Ridley Havergal, 1836-1879

MISS FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL was the daughter of a clergyman of the Church of England, the Rev. W. H. Havergal. He was both musician and hymn-writer; and his gifted daughter, consecrating her life and her talents to the Master, wrote many helpful hymns, setting some of them to her own music, as is illustrated by the hymn, "Golden harps are sounding."

Miss Anne Steele, who lived and wrote some of the best hymns in the eighteenth century, frequently signed her hymns with the name "Theodosia." Miss Havergal has been compared with Miss Steele, and is sometimes styled "the Theodosia of the nineteenth century," so influential has her life proved to be through her hymns as well as through her many other good works.

The Havergal manuscripts contain the following account of the writing of this hymn: "When visiting at Parry Barr," Miss Havergal "walked to the boys' schoolroom, and being very tired she leaned against the playground wall while Mr. Snepp went in. Returning in ten minutes, he found her scribbling on an old envelope. At his request she gave him the hymn just penciled, 'Golden harps are sounding.' Her popular tune, 'Hermas,' was composed for this hymn."

At the age of forty-two she died at Caswell Bay, Swansea. But shortly before she passed away, closing a life of rare usefulness in the salvation of many souls, she gathered up her strength and sang:

"Golden harps are sounding,
Angel voices ring,
Pearly gates are opened . . ."

Twenty-first Sunday: Missionary

“Jesus shall reign where'er the sun” (242)

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

AMONG the many monuments of England's greatest heroes in Westminster Abbey, London, there stands a memorial tablet to Dr. Isaac Watts, upon which the poet is represented with pen in hand writing at a table, and above him an angel is whispering to him words of inspiration. Thus has England honored the memory of the father of modern English hymns.

His missionary hymn, beginning “Jesus shall reign where'er the sun,” has been used the world over on missionary occasions. It was originally entitled “Christ's Kingdom Among the Gentiles,” and is part of his admirable translation of the second part of the seventy-second psalm.

Probably no instance of its use has been more dramatic than when it was sung in one of the South Sea Islands in 1862. The conversion of the South Sea Islanders from cannibalism to Christianity is one of the most brilliant pages in the history of missionary conquest. One of the tribal kings had been with many of his people converted to Christianity, and he decided to proclaim a Christian constitution for his government. Accordingly, he set apart a certain day for the final ceremony. Over five thousand natives of the islands of Tonga, Fiji, and Samoa were present, rescued from the savagery of heathenism; and during the ceremony they all united their voices in singing:

“Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does His successive journeys run.”

Twenty-second Sunday: Decoration Day

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord" (278)

Julia Ward Howe, 1819-1910

CHAPLAIN CHARLES C. McCABE, afterward a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was confined in Libby Prison during a part of the Civil War. In his famous lecture on "The Bright Side of Life in Libby Prison" he used to tell this story of the arrival of the news from the Battle of Gettysburg:

"I had a relative in Richmond, a stanch rebel. The day they received the first tidings from Gettysburg he came to see me, his face wreathed in smiles: 'Have you heard the news?' 'What news?' 'Forty thousand Yankee prisoners on their way to Richmond!' I was astounded! In dumb amazement I listened to the Confederate officers speculating where the new prisoners should be stowed away, and how they were to be fed. I went upstairs and told the news. Despondency settled down into every heart.

"That night as we assembled for 'family prayers' and sang, as was always our wont, the Long-meter Doxology, it trembled out from quavering voices up to Him who has said, 'Glorify me in the fires.' I slept none that night, listening wearily to the watch calling the hours and singing out as he did so, 'All's well.' When the day broke I waited for the foot-steps of 'Old Ben,' a character well known to every inmate of Libby. He was the prison news agent and sold papers at twenty-five cents apiece. At last his footfall came. He pushed the door ajar, looked around for a moment on the sleepers, and then raising his arms he shouted, 'Great news in de papers!'

"Did you ever see a resurrection? I never did but this once. O, how those men sprang to their feet! And what was the news? The telegraph operator at Martinsburg, when putting those ciphers to the four, had clicked the instrument once too often. There was a mistake of thirty-six thousand! More yet! Lee was driven back, the Potomac was swollen, the pontoons were washed away! I have stood by when friends long-parted meet again with raining tears and fond embrace, but never did I witness such joy as swept into those strong men's faces, where the deepest sorrow sat but a moment before. Well, what did we do? Why, we sang; sang as saved men do; sang till Captains Flynn and Sawyer, immured in the lowest dungeons below and doomed to die within ten days, heard us and wondered; sang till the very walls of Libby quivered in the melody as five hundred of us joined in the chorus of Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's 'Battle Hymn of the Republic,' 'Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.' "

This hymn was written in 1861, at the beginning of the Civil War in the United States, inspired partly by the scene of troops hurrying from the North to Southern battlefields. All during that terrible struggle it was the great war song of the Union armies.

Twenty-third Sunday

“Lead, kindly Light, amid th’ encircling gloom” (169)

John Henry Newman, 1801-1890

THIS prayer-hymn, cast in high poetic form, was penned by John Henry Newman, afterward a cardinal in the Roman Catholic Church, while on shipboard on Sunday, June 16, 1833. It is said that the ship had been compelled to proceed slowly because of the dense fog that encompassed it. Dr. Newman was returning to Marseilles, France, from a visit he had made to Italy. While in Sicily he was taken seriously ill and on his recovery he waited for his ship in Palermo for three weeks.

Probably both of these facts entered somewhat into the imagery of the hymn, as is evidenced by such phrases as “th’ encircling gloom” and “The night is dark, and I am far from home.”

The thought and sentiment of the hymn, however, were wrought out of the mental darkness in which Newman was then groping. Some time before, he wrote this note: “Now in my room in Oriel College, slowly advancing, etc., and led on by God’s hand blindly, not knowing whither he is taking me.” This darkness, beclouding his faith, had become still deeper during the summer of his Italian journey, during which he wrote “Lead, Kindly Light.” But the expression of his supreme trust in God, which shines through these lines, so universally popular, has helped many a soul that has yearned for guidance “amid th’ encircling gloom.”

Twenty-fourth Sunday: Children's Day

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild" (174)

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

JOHN B. GOUGH with a friend one day went up to a small garret room. A feeble voice said, "Come in!" and they entered. Through the gloom they saw a boy, ten years old, lying on a heap of chips. "What are you doing there?" they asked. "Hush!" he replied; "I am hiding." As he showed his bruised and swollen arms, he added: "Poor father got drunk and beat me because I would not steal. . . . Once I went to ragged school and they taught me 'Thou shalt not steal,' and told me about God in heaven. I will not steal, sir, if my father kills me."

The friend said: "I don't know what to do with you. Here's a shilling. I will see what we can do for you." The boy looked at it a minute, and then said: "But please, sir, wouldn't you like to hear my little hymn?" They marveled that a lad suffering from cold and hunger and bruises could sing a hymn; but they answered: "Yes, we will hear you." And then in a low, sweet voice he sang, "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild." At the conclusion he said: "That's my little hymn. Good-by."

Next morning they mounted the stairs again, knocking at the door, but there came no answer. They opened the door and went in. The shilling lay on the floor, and there too lay the boy—dead, but with a brave smile on his face. His "Gentle Jesus" had taken him home to heaven.

Twenty-fifth Sunday

“In the cross of Christ I glory” (87)

John Bowring, 1792-1872

AMONG the hymn-writers represented in our Sunday School Hymnal are to be found a shoemaker, a prisoner in bondage, an editor, several bishops and a cardinal, a converted slave-trader, a lawyer, a blind woman, a student, and a college professor. None, however, bore greater distinction, or won higher glory in the public life of a statesman, than did Sir John Bowring. He represented the English government in France at one time. Later he was consul to Hongkong, and afterward governor of Hongkong. He became a great factor in the political development of the Orient. Twice he was a member of the British Parliament and was knighted in 1854. Besides his distinctions in statecraft, he won high literary honors and was the master of thirteen different languages, having made translations from all of them into English.

In spite of all these great earthly successes, and in spite of the fact that he was a Unitarian by faith, he humbled himself before the cross of Jesus Christ and uttered his faith in the striking word-picture of this hymn :

In the cross of Christ I glory,

Towering o'er the wrecks of time.

He lived to be over eighty years old, writing other famous hymns, among them our well-known missionary hymn, “Watchman, tell us of the night.” At length he died in 1872 at Exeter, his birthplace ; and upon his tombstone you may read the inscription, “In the cross of Christ I glory.”

Twenty-sixth Sunday: Temperance

"Oft in danger, oft in woe" (217)

Henry Kirke White, 1785-1806

Frances Sara (Fuller-Maitland) Colquhoun, 1809-1877

Two authors are responsible for the hymn, "Oft in danger, oft in woe." The first verse was written by a young man, Henry Kirke White, who died October 19, 1806, while still a student in Saint John's College, Cambridge University. The other verses were written by a fourteen-year-old girl, Frances Sara Fuller-Maitland, who successfully carried the spirit of White's fragmentary lines into the subsequent verses, first published by her mother, Mrs. Bertha Fuller-Maitland in 1827.

White was born in Nottingham, England, March 21, 1785. Not wanting to become a butcher, like his father, he became apprenticed to a weaver when only fourteen years old, afterward entering a law office. His genius as a poet began to blossom while he was still a boy. A book of his poems that he published at the age of seventeen showed that he had become irreligious.

A dear friend of his, named Almond, had become a Christian, and told White that they could no longer associate together, because of White's scorn of the Christian life. This hurt White so deeply that he exclaimed: "You surely think worse of me than I deserve!" But Almond's courageous stand brought White to his senses, and gradually the young poet realized his lost condition and found his way to the Saviour of mankind. The story of his struggle toward the light is pictured in his hymn, "When marshaled on the nightly plain." After his death in college they found on some mathematical papers his lines, beginning, "Much in sorrow, oft in woe."

Twenty-seventh Sunday: Independence Day

"My country, 'tis of thee" (274)

Samuel Francis Smith, 1808-1895

A STUDENT, twenty-three years old, studying in Andover Theological Seminary for the Baptist ministry, wrote the American national hymn in less than a half hour on the second day of February, 1832. His name was Samuel F. Smith, the author also of "The morning light is breaking." The words were in part inspired by the tune we call "America," which he had found in a German collection of songs loaned to him shortly before by Lowell Mason, that master editor of hymn-books in the early nineteenth century. Mason had secured the book from William C. Woodbridge.

Authorities have disagreed as to where the tune came from—whether Saxony, Russia, Sweden, or England, in all of which countries it has been popularly sung to patriotic words. Because of its striking similarity to certain ancient tunes, it has been claimed by various writers to have come from an old French tune or a still older Scottish carol. The probabilities are—and on this most editors agree to-day—that the first man to write the tune in nearly its present form was Henry Carey, an English composer, who lived from 1685 until 1743. Once when regret was expressed to Dr. Smith that his American national hymn is sung to the same tune as the British hymn, he replied: "I do not share this regret. On the contrary, I deem it a new and beautiful bond of union between the mother country and her daughter." The hymn was first sung July 4, 1832, at a children's patriotic celebration in Boston.

Twenty-eighth Sunday

"O say, can you see by the dawn's early light" (277)

Francis Scott Key, 1779-1843

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY, author of the "Star-Spangled Banner," was born at Double Pipe Creek, Maryland, on the estate of his father, John Ross Key, an officer in the Revolutionary War. He was educated at Saint John's College, practiced law at Frederick, Maryland, and for three terms served as district attorney at Georgetown in the District of Columbia under President Andrew Jackson.

During the War of 1812 with England, Key visited the British ship, "Minden," in order to secure the release of some of the prisoners, one of them being his friend, Dr. William Beanes, of Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Merely because of his sympathy with the American cause, Dr. Beanes was held by the British. Key was successful in getting the prisoners released. But just as they were all about to depart, the British decided not to let them go that night because of the attack about to be made upon Baltimore. Accordingly, they were taken on board the frigate "Surprise" and carried up the Patapsco River to their own vessel, which was kept under guard, lest they escape and give away information to their fellow countrymen. During the battle between the ships and the forts their anxiety was intense. And as Key walked the deck, eagerly awaiting the dawn, which should tell him whether or not over Fort McHenry the flag was still there, he wrote on the back of a letter:

"O say, can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last
gleaming?"

On the rowboat that bore him shoreward in the morning he completed the song now so famous.

Twenty-ninth Sunday

“Jerusalem the golden” (257)

Bernard of Cluny, —12th Century

THE pious monk, now known as Bernard of Cluny, was born in the twelfth century in Morlaix, France; and upon maturity dedicated himself to the service of God in the Abbey of Cluny. Whether or not he was named after Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, as some suppose, it is known that he was much younger than the author of “Jesus, the very thought of Thee.” From within the cloistered walls of the Abbey the godly man looked out upon the world about him, and was sick at heart to see so much worldliness and sin in the life of the people of his day.

As he meditated upon this sad condition, which weighed so heavily upon his soul, he wrote in the Latin language a great poem of three thousand lines, entitled “Concerning a Disdain of the World.” While it is largely a satire upon the sinful age, and warns against the wrath to come, the poem by way of contrast contains the most exalted passages, expressing the poet’s eager contemplation of the glorious life awaiting the blessed in heaven. Dr. John Mason Neale, an English clergyman and scholar, has made exquisite translations into English from these lines upon heaven, and from his translations, among others, has been taken our stirring hymn, “Jerusalem the golden.” It has been called the “Hymn of heavenly homesickness,” as it expresses so tenderly the yearning of the devout soul for “that sweet and blessed country.”

Thirtieth Sunday: Missionary

"O for a thousand tongues to sing" (5)

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

CHARLES WESLEY, the greatest hymn-writer in Methodist history, wrote over six thousand hymns, some of which have attained the first rank in English hymnody. He and his brother, John Wesley, admitted that they made more converts through their hymns than through their preaching.

Charles Wesley usually celebrated each anniversary of his birthday by writing a hymn of praise to God. Little wonder, therefore, that the first anniversary of his conversion, his spiritual birthday, should be celebrated by one of the most helpful hymns in use among Methodists. The opening line of the hymn, "O for a thousand tongues to sing," is reminiscent of a remark of praise to God, once uttered to Wesley by Peter Böhler: "Had I a thousand tongues, I would praise Him with them all."

When Charles Wesley was converted he had been ill in bed for some time, and the fear of death had often come into his mind. On Sunday, May 21, 1738, his brother and some friends came in and sang a hymn. After they went out he prayed alone for some time. In his journal we read: "I was composing myself to sleep in quietness and peace when I heard one come in and say, 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise, and believe, and thou shalt be healed of all thine infirmities.' The words struck me to the heart. I lay musing and trembling. With a strange palpitation of heart, I said, yet feared to say, 'I believe, I believe!'" These memories he has woven into that wonderful third verse of the hymn:

Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

Thirty-first Sunday

"Glorious things of thee are spoken" (115)
John Newton, 1725-1807

WHEN John Newton, an English preacher of the eighteenth century, in his old age could no longer read his texts, he was urged to give up preaching. "What!" said he, "shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?" And in these words he correctly characterized himself as he had been before conversion. Newton could never forget that the grace of God had rescued him from the depths of sin. His godly mother had taught him the Scriptures. But she died when he was only seven years old, and at the age of eleven he went to sea with his father. His life as a sailor was full of exciting adventures and full of wickedness. He became a sea captain and a slave-trader, and was enslaved himself for a time. For years the only good influence that he knew came through his love for his future wife, Mary Catlett.

One frightful night, when he was twenty-three years old, the waterlogged vessel he was steering was almost lost. Thus facing death all night long, he surrendered his life to Jesus Christ and turned away from his sins. Later he came under the influence of Whitefield and the Wesleys, entered the Christian ministry, and lived a life of wide usefulness in the service of the Master. His influence lives to-day chiefly in the hymns that he wrote, many of them being first published with those of Cowper in the "Olney Hymns" and similar collections. His hymn, "Glorious things of thee are spoken," which we sing to the Austrian national tune, is one of the finest hymns of praise in the English language.

Thirty-second Sunday

"Hark, my soul! it is the Lord" (145)

William Cowper, 1731-1800

WILLIAM COWPER is regarded as the greatest English poet who has contributed any considerable number of hymns to the wealth of our English hymnody. His life was one of great suffering and was tragic to a high degree. His early school life was extremely unhappy. Later, while studying law, he fell in love with Theodora Cowper, who was his own cousin. His devotion to her he expressed in several love poems. But to Cowper's great sorrow their marriage was forbidden by her father. The disease of melancholia fastened itself upon his mind, and his sufferings became most acute.

Though he recovered, his life was beclouded throughout by his mental depression, and he occasionally lapsed into the most desperate forms of melancholy.

Despite his great affliction, he wrote many of our most beloved hymns. His association with John Newton stimulated his interest in hymn-writing, even though it may not have added much wholesome cheer to his darkened soul. The hymn "Hark, my soul! it is the Lord" is perhaps the tenderest that fell from his pen. The last verse expresses simply, but exquisitely, the anxieties and yearnings of his spiritual life:

Lord, it is my chief complaint
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love Thee and adore:
Oh for grace to love Thee more!

Thirty-third Sunday

“Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear” (46)

John Keble, 1792-1866

ONE of the literary landmarks of the early nineteenth century, in sacred poetry at least, was *The Christian Year*, the work of the Rev. John Keble. A high churchman of the Church of England, he was one of the founders of the Tractarian Movement, which aimed at producing a higher spiritual condition within the church. At one time he was professor of poetry in Oxford University.

From his *Christian Year* was taken our hymn, “Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,” which was part of a long hymn entitled “Evening.”

In “Famous Hymns of the World,” Allan Sutherland tells this story of Keble’s hymn: “In a wild night a gallant ship went to her doom. A few women and children were placed in a boat, without oars or sails, and drifted away at the mercy of the waves. Earlier in the evening, before the darkness had quite settled down, brave men on the shore had seen the peril of the vessel and had put out in the face of the tempest, hoping to save human life, but even the ship could not be found. After fruitless search, they were about returning to the shore, when out on the water, and above the wail of the storm, they heard a woman’s clear voice singing:

‘Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,
It is not night, if Thou be near.’

The work of rescue was quickly accomplished. But for the singing, in all probability, this boatload of lives would have drifted beyond human help or been dashed to pieces before morning.”

Thirty-fourth Sunday: Missionary

“The morning light is breaking” (246)

Samuel Francis Smith, 1808-1895

THIS missionary hymn of optimism and of challenge to the Christian Church was written in the same year and by the same author as our national hymn, “My country, 'tis of thee.” The author was the Rev. Samuel Francis Smith, of whom his classmate in Harvard University, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, wrote in the Class Poem of 1829:

And there's a fine youngster of excellent pith,
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith.

The year of its composition was 1832, when the author graduated from Andover Theological Seminary, entered the Baptist ministry, and became editor of the Baptist Missionary Magazine. Little wonder that he should have written a missionary hymn in a year of such missionary interest to himself!

The hymn was first published in a hymnal that was under preparation that same year, Hastings' Spiritual Songs. In 1843 the author included it in a collection of hymns entitled The Psalmist, which he and Baron Stow prepared for American Baptists—a hymnal that achieved wide popularity.

Though Dr. Smith two years later left the missionary editorship to enter the pastorate at Waterville, Maine, he did not lose his intense interest in missions. And so after his pastorate in Newton, Massachusetts, we find him editor of the publications of the Baptist Missionary Union. Having traveled widely among the foreign missions, Dr. Smith was enabled to write that his hymn “has been a great favorite at missionary gatherings, and I myself heard it sung in five or six different languages in Europe and Asia.”

Thirty-fifth Sunday: Labor Sunday

"Take my life, and let it be" (200)

Frances Ridley Havergal, 1836-1879

Of this hymn, written while visiting Areley House, in England, 1874, the author, Frances Ridley Havergal, once wrote: "There were ten persons in the house, some unconverted and long prayed for; some converted, but not rejoicing Christians. He gave me the prayer: 'Lord, give me all in this house.' And He just DID! Before I left the house everyone had got a blessing. The last night of my visit, after I had retired, the governess asked me to go to the two daughters. They were crying, etc. Then and there both of them trusted and rejoiced. It was nearly midnight. I was too happy to sleep, and passed most of the night in praise and renewal of my own consecration; and these little couplets formed themselves and chimed in my heart one after another until they finished with 'Ever, only, all for Thee!'"

Four years later she wrote: "The Lord has shown me another little step, and of course I have taken it with extreme delight. 'Take my silver and my gold' now means shipping off all my ornaments (including a jewel cabinet, which is really fit for a countess) to the Church Missionary House, where they will be accepted and disposed of for me. I retain only a brooch or two for daily wear, which are memorials of my dear parents; also a locket with the only portrait I have of my niece, who is in heaven. But these I redeem so that the whole value goes to the Church Missionary Society."

Thirty-sixth Sunday

"I think,—when I read that sweet story of old" (82)
Jemima Luke, 1813-1906

JEMIMA THOMPSON, who afterward married the Rev. Samuel Luke, wrote this hymn in 1841. Like many hymns, it was partly inspired by a tune—in this case a Greek melody—the pathos of which stirred the author's fancy as she read it at the Normal Infant School at Gray's Inn Road. She once wrote: "I went one day on some missionary business to the little town of Wellington, five miles from Faunton, in a stagecoach. It was a beautiful spring morning; it was an hour's ride and there was no other inside passenger. On the back of an old envelope I wrote in pencil the first two of the verses now so well known. . . . The third verse was added afterward to make it a missionary hymn."

One day a newsboy in New York entered a bank with a bundle of papers under his arm and asked two gentlemen sitting before a fire: "Papers, sirs? Three more banks down!" "No," replied one of them, "we don't want any. But stop! If you will sing us a song we will buy one." The boy agreed; and, expecting to hear a jovial song, they placed the little ten-year-old on a table. But he surprised them by singing, "I think,—when I read that sweet story of old." Soon they were both in tears. They bought his papers and took his name and address; and the song of the Sunday school lad turned their thoughts to the olden story, "When Jesus was here among men."

Thirty-seventh Sunday

"A mighty fortress is our God" (22)

Martin Luther, 1483-1546

THIS great war song of the Reformation, written by Martin Luther, has heartened many a German army going into battle, and has given courage to many a son of Germany amid the hardships of strange lands. It was sung every day by Luther and his friends. Before the battle of Leipzig, September 17, 1631, the whole army of Gustavus Adolphus sang the hymn.

The story is still repeated by the Germans of Herkimer County, New York, of John Christian Bush, who settled there with his family of six children and founded the village of Shell's Bush. On the afternoon of August 6, 1781, a band of Indians, led by Donald McDonald, a Scotch refugee, attacked the village. Bush, who was working in the field when they came, hurriedly assembled his people within his block-house, all except two of his children who were captured by the Indians. All afternoon and far into the night they fought furiously, Bush's wife doing valiant service in loading the guns, so that the men might never be empty-handed. Each time the Indians attacked the door they were forced back. Once they broke down the door, but the quick firing halted them. McDonald was wounded and dragged within the fort by the Germans, and the Indians fled. Then the patriots sang:

"A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing."

Again the Indians attacked and again were repulsed, while Bush and his victorious neighbors sang the rest of the hymn as a pæan of thankfulness to God for preserving their lives in the midst of peril.

Thirty-eighth Sunday: Harvest

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow" (281)

Thomas Ken, 1637-1710

THE doxology of praise to the Holy Trinity was written by the Rev. Thomas Ken, whom King Charles II once made a chaplain to his sister, Mary, Princess of Orange. Ken was so courageous in his preaching at court that the king often said on the way to chapel: "I must go and hear Ken tell me my faults." The king afterward made him Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Bishop McCabe said that while the prisoners of the Union Army during the Civil War were incarcerated in Libby Prison, day after day they saw comrades passing away and their numbers increased by living recruits. One night, about ten o'clock, through the darkness they heard the tramp of feet that soon stopped before the prison door, until arrangements could be made inside. In the company was a young Baptist minister, whose heart almost fainted when he looked in those cold walls and thought of the suffering inside. Tired and weary, he sat down, put his face in his hands, and wept. Just then a lone voice sang out from an upper window, "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow"; a dozen joined in the second line, more than a score in the third line, and the words "Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" were sung by nearly all the prisoners. As the song died away on the still night, the young man arose and sang:

"Prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with me there."

Thirty-ninth Sunday: Temperance

"What a Friend we have in Jesus" (153)

Joseph Scriven, 1820-1886

ONE of the most helpful hymns in popular use is Joseph Scriven's hymn on the friendship of Jesus, the comforter and burden-bearer. Scriven was a native of Dublin, Ireland, born in 1820. He graduated from Trinity College in his native city. At the age of twenty-five he emigrated to Canada, and lived there until his death at Port Hope on Lake Ontario, October 10, 1886.

When a young man, he was engaged to be married to a lady whom he had known and loved for a long time. All preparations had been made for the wedding ceremony and the date had been fixed. But shortly before the wedding day arrived his promised bride was accidentally drowned, and he was plunged into the deepest sorrow. From this sad experience came a deep sense of his dependence upon Christ and of the great truth so helpfully expressed in his lines:

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!

Out of the intense sympathy wrought in his heart by this experience, he wrote the hymn to comfort his mother in her own sorrow and sent it to her in Ireland. How it came to be first published is not known, as he had not intended it for general use. Indeed, for some time after it was printed its authorship was unknown, being sometimes incorrectly attributed to Dr. Horatius Bonar. After Scriven's death, however, he became recognized as the author of the hymn that has blessed so many thousands of believers.

Fortieth Sunday: Rally Day

“O God, my powers are Thine” (235)

Frederick Watson Hannan, 1865-

THE Rev. Frederick Watson Hannan, now professor of pastoral theology in Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey, was for eight years the pastor of the Bushwick Avenue Central Methodist Episcopal Church, Brooklyn, New York City, which has a Sunday school of over thirty-three hundred enrolled members. Each fall during Dr. Hannan's pastorate there it was the custom to observe Sunday School Day as a Rally Day, when special exercises were held not only in the school, but also in the morning congregational service. A sermon was preached especially to the teachers, and a service of responsive readings was prepared, in which the pastor and teachers took part. After the sermon a consecration service for the teachers was held, and for this service Dr. Hannan always wrote a hymn, which was sung by the teachers as they stood around the altar. The whole service was very impressive.

The hymn, “O God, my powers are Thine,” was the consecration hymn used on September 24, 1905, and was especially written for that occasion. In the Hymnal it is printed almost exactly as it was in the weekly church calendar of that date. Now this hymn is being used every year in similar consecration services for Sunday school teachers, for it breathes in song the highest ideals of self-surrender to God, which is the first condition for effective service in the work of all truly devoted Sunday school teachers.

Forty-first Sunday

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me" (175)
Augustus Montague Toplady, 1740-1778

THE author, the Rev. Augustus M. Toplady, bitterly opposed the doctrines preached by the Wesleys, who lived at the same time, but his sincere Christian piety produced this great hymn, that has become endeared to many generations of Wesleyan followers.

Years ago the steamer *Sewanhaka* burned at sea. One of the Fisk Jubilee singers was aboard. Before jumping into the sea he fastened life preservers on himself and his wife; but some one snatched hers away from her. In the water, however, she put her hands on his shoulders and thus kept afloat until, almost exhausted, she said to her husband, "I cannot hold on any longer!" "Try a little longer," begged the agonized husband. "Let us sing 'Rock of Ages.'" And as the hymn rang out over the waves, others almost sinking took up the strains of the pleading prayer to God. The hymn seemed to give new strength to many in that desperate hour. By and by a boat was seen approaching, and as it came nearer the singing was renewed until with superhuman efforts they laid hold upon the life-boats and were carried to safety. The singer, in telling this story himself, declared that he believed this hymn had saved many lives, besides his own and his wife's, in that dreadful disaster.

Likewise, hundreds of stories might be told of the saving of souls spiritually through the helpful ministries of this, one of the greatest hymns ever penned in the English language.

Forty-second Sunday

"Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide" (53)

Henry Francis Lyte, 1793-1847

THE spirit of the walk of Christ with the disciples to Emmaus at eventide is reproduced in the hymn, "Abide with me." This has been sung at the close of many a day, and, indeed, of many a Christian life, as believers have uttered it as a prayer for the presence of Christ. It was composed one Sabbath evening in 1847 out of a deep sadness that had settled down upon its author, the Rev. Henry F. Lyte. He had conducted his last communion service that day at the close of a pastorate of twenty-four years at Brixham, England. A fatal illness had already seized him and he was about to leave England to prolong his life, if possible, in the South. Toward evening he walked down his garden path to the seaside, and there thought out the imagery and many of the lines of his famous hymn. Into this he has woven the sense of change and of helpfulness that one must feel in the presence of death, and also the trustful dependence upon Jesus Christ, the "Help of the helpless," which every true Christian must feel in that solemn hour. Returning to his home, he wrote out the hymn, perfecting its lines and giving to the Christian world one of its tenderest prayer-hymns. He left at once for the south of France, and soon after his arrival in Nice his strength failed him, and whispering the words "Peace! Joy!" while he was pointing his hand upward, he died.

Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me!

Forty-third Sunday: Missionary

"Christ for the world we sing" (247)

Samuel Wolcott, 1813-1886

THE influence of a motto or slogan when used as a rallying cry in a campaign can scarcely be measured. Many a political election has been determined by the popularity of some striking phrase. In many a war an army has been inspirited by a battle cry, such as, "On to Richmond!" We all know the inspiration of the "Look up! Lift up!" motto in Epworth League work, and of "The Evangelization of the World in this Generation" in missionary work.

This hymn was suggested and partly inspired by just such a motto, which had been adopted by the Young Men's Christian Association of Ohio. And at their meeting on February 7, 1869, this motto was woven into a legend of evergreen letters over the pulpit of the church where they met: "CHRIST FOR THE WORLD AND THE WORLD FOR CHRIST."

There was a clergyman in attendance upon that meeting, a native of South Windsor, Connecticut, by the name of Dr. Samuel Wolcott. He had been a missionary to Syria and also pastor of several Congregational churches in New England and elsewhere. He was nearly fifty-six years old, and though he had not done much hymn-writing up to that time, before he died seventeen years later he had written over two hundred hymns. So impressed was he on this occasion by the motto, and by all that was said and done during the meeting to reenforce it, that on his way home from the service, walking through the streets, he composed the hymn, "Christ for the world we sing."

Forty-fourth Sunday

“Forward! be our watchword” (227)

Henry Alford, 1810-1871

DEAN HENRY ALFORD stood forth as one of the great ecclesiastical scholars of his generation. Twenty years of scholarly labor he devoted to his edition of the Greek New Testament, and accomplished besides a great wealth of literary labors, including many original hymns and translations of hymns. Probably his most popular hymn is, “Forward! be our watchword.” The great Dean of Canterbury, shortly before his death, was requested by the Rev. J. G. Wood to write a hymn to be sung at the tenth festival of parochial choirs of the Canterbury Diocesan Union on June 6, 1871. His first hymn so written did not seem to Mr. Wood to be adaptable to processional use; and he suggested that the Dean go into the cathedral and march up and down the aisles, and so compose the processional hymn. Accordingly, the old Dean went into the stately cathedral, and, slowly marching beneath the high-vaulted roof and past the ancient shrines of Canterbury, where many of England’s greatest men are sepulchered, he composed, while joining his voice to his steps, the hymn,

Forward! be our watchword,
Steps and voices joined.

It was sung by the Canterbury choirs at their festival, but before that day had come the Dean had passed on to the higher life, pressing

Forward through the darkness,
Forward into light!

Forty-fifth Sunday

"Come, Thou Almighty King" (1)

Author unknown

THE national hymn of England, "God save our gracious king," is supposed to have been published first in 1743 or 1744. Within a couple of years, sung to the melody to which we Americans sing "My country, 'tis of thee," it attained great popularity and gradually, by virtue of its widespread use, became known as the English national hymn.

Whenever a song gains universal favor many parodies and imitations are based upon it; and our hymn, "Come, Thou Almighty King," was written shortly afterward in imitation of "God save the king" in both meter and style. Though it is attributed to Charles Wesley in this hymnal, the author is really unknown.

In the days of the American Revolution a congregation of patriotic colonists were worshiping in their church on Long Island when the service was interrupted by the arrival of a company of Hessian troops. The captain stalked up the aisle and commanded the people to sing "God save the king." The organist started the tune that we call "America"; but the people, true to the cause of the American colonies and to their God, sang this hymn:

"Come, Thou Almighty King,
Help us Thy name to sing."

And the soldiers withdrew without enforcing their demands.

Forty-sixth Sunday

"He leadeth me! O blessed thought!" (177)

Joseph Henry Gilmore, 1834-

DR. JOSEPH H. GILMORE, the son of a governor of New Hampshire, began his career as pastor of a Baptist church, later becoming professor of Hebrew in Rochester Theological Seminary and afterward professor of English literature in Rochester University, New York. In 1862, the year of his ordination, he was visiting in Philadelphia and conducted the Wednesday evening prayer meeting in the First Baptist Church of that city. He took for his subject the Twenty-third Psalm, that most beloved hymn from the world's first hymn book. After the meeting Dr. Gilmore wrote this hymn on the text, "He leadeth me beside the still waters." It came as a result of a conversation in the home he was visiting that evening on the theme of the prayer meeting. Dr. Gilmore has described the occasion thus: "During the conversation, the blessedness of God's leadership so grew upon me that I took out my pencil, wrote the hymn just as it stands to-day, handed it to my wife, and thought no more about it. She sent it, without my knowledge, to the *Watchman and Recorder*. Three years later I went to Rochester to preach for the Second Baptist Church. On entering the chapel, I took up a hymn book, thinking, 'I wonder what they sing?' The book opened at 'He leadeth me!' and that was the first time I knew my hymn had found a place among the songs of the church."

Forty-seventh Sunday: Missionary

"Hail to the Lord's Anointed" (59)

James Montgomery, 1771-1854

JAMES MONTGOMERY, born in Scotland, the son of a Moravian clergyman, was an editor by profession. Though as a child he had joined the Moravian Church, he lost his early piety when he became a young man; but later in life he was converted, and joined the Moravian Church again at the age of forty-three. Thus, he became a Christian warrior, such as he describes, standing

In all the armor of his God;
The Spirit's sword is in his hand,
His feet are with the gospel shod.

He and Cowper hold the foremost place among laymen of the church who are eminent hymn-writers.

His hymn, "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," he wrote in 1821, seven years after he joined the church a second time. It is a metrical version of the seventy-second psalm. It was written as a Christmas hymn and was first sung on Christmas Day, 1821, at a great convocation of Moravians in their settlement at Fulneck. At a Wesleyan missionary meeting, held in Liverpool on April 14 of the following year, 1822, when Dr. Adam Clarke presided, Montgomery made an address and closed it by the recital of this hymn with all of its verses, some of which are omitted in this hymnal. Dr. Clarke later used it in his famous Commentary in connection with his discussion of the seventy-second psalm.

Forty-eighth Sunday: Thanksgiving

“We plow the fields, and scatter” (271)

Matthias Claudius, 1740-1815

FROM the German have been translated many of our richest hymns. Most of John Wesley's hymns in use among Methodists are those he has translated from German hymns, and chiefly those expressing the mystical faith of the Moravians. This harvest hymn of thanksgiving, “We plow the fields, and scatter,” was translated from the German hymn of Matthias Claudius by Miss Jane Montgomery Campbell in 1861. She was the daughter of an English clergyman, and he was the son of a German clergyman. Claudius lived to be seventy-four years old and died in 1815, two years before Miss Campbell was born.

This hymn was freely translated from a portion of a longer poem of seventeen verses with chorus. It appeared first in a sketch called Paul Erdmann's Feast. It was represented as the song that was sung at Paul's home by the peasants after the harvest was over.

As may be inferred from this hymn, there was a wholesome cheer in the author's writings as well as in his life, and this in spite of the fact that he was not unaccustomed to hardships. Menzel has said of him that his genius never reached its fullest development because he was constantly harassed by his poverty. But he was a man of great piety, and his influence for good was very considerable. He chose to dwell upon the blessings with which God enriches us, and from his very heart he sang:

“We thank Thee, then, O Father,
For all things bright and good.”

Forty-ninth Sunday

“The God of Abraham praise” (23)

Thomas Olivers, 1725-1799

THOMAS OLIVERS, when a boy orphaned and friendless, fell into the company of bad companions and won the reputation of being “the worst boy in that country in thirty years.” As a man, he learned the trade of a shoemaker, but continued in his wicked ways, until at last the preaching of Whitefield got hold upon his soul, stirring him with a message from the text, “Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?”

Olivers became converted, and immediately set about helping the Wesleys in the work of plucking other brands from the fire. He assisted in setting up type for the Wesleyan publications, he became an efficient preacher and, as is evidenced by this wonderful hymn, a hymn-writer of a high order.

One night in London, he was attracted to a service in a Jewish synagogue, where he heard a great singer, Leoni, sing an ancient Hebrew melody in the solemn, plaintive mode and he became impressed with a desire to write a hymn to that tune. The result was our hymn, “The God of Abraham praise,” which is in a sense a paraphrase of the ancient Hebrew Yigdal, or doxology, though Olivers gave to it a distinctly Christian flavor.

The story is told of a young Jewess who had been baptized into the Christian faith, and in consequence was abandoned by her family. She fled to the home of the minister, poured out her heart to him, and as if to show that, after all, her joy in her new-found Saviour was greater than all her loss of home and family, she sang, “The God of Abraham praise.”

Fiftieth Sunday

"Nearer, my God, to Thee" (180)

Sarah Flower Adams, 1805-1848

BENJAMIN FLOWER in 1798 published an article in the Cambridge Intelligencer, attacking the attitude of Bishop Watson toward the French Revolution, and so offended the reverend gentleman that Flower was cast into prison. Among those who visited him in prison to sympathize with him was Miss Eliza Gould, who met him there for the first time. After his release they were married. Their youngest child, Sarah, became Mrs. Sarah Flower Adams; and by that name she is known as the author of "Nearer, my God, to Thee."

In 1841, deeply impressed by the story in Genesis of Jacob's vision at Bethel of the ladder to heaven with angels ascending and descending thereon, she wrote her hymn that has since become so universally popular and helpful.

The Rev. Dr. Millard F. Troxell tells of the experience of a group of tourists, cloud-bound on the summit of Pike's Peak, huddled about the fireplace in the block-house: "It was suggested that we sing some popular melody. A voice began one of the many sentimental songs of the day, but few knew enough of it to join in, so the singer was left to finish it alone. Then some one began to sing softly, 'Nearer, my God, to Thee,' and before the second line was ended it seemed as if all who had been strangers now felt at home; and, for the time-being, the place seemed like a very Bethel." Before long the mists rolled away and "before us stretched the most wonderful of views."

This hymn is remembered as the dying prayer of our martyred President McKinley.

Fifty-first Sunday: Christmas

"Hark! the herald angels sing" (61)

Charles Wesley, 1707-1788

THE only hymn of Charles Wesley's that has been admitted to the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England is this Christmas hymn. This is true in spite of the fact that, as an ordained clergyman of that denomination, he was the greatest hymn-writer ever produced by the Church of England. But, of course, Charles Wesley and his brother, John Wesley, belong to Methodism as well. Until death came to them they remained clergymen of the Established Church. The great religious movement founded by John Wesley, and inspired by the hymns of Charles Wesley, and known therefore as the Wesleyan Revival, was intended to quicken the spiritual work of their church. But, besides doing this, it developed into organized Methodism as a separate church, and as such has proved to be a tremendous religious force in the world.

This Christmas hymn was first written in 1739 and first published the same year in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* by John and Charles Wesley, their first joint hymnal; and it began with the lines:

Hark! how all the welkin rings,
Glory to the King of kings.

Many revisions have been made in the original hymn, some of which are contained in our Sunday School Hymnal. This hymn has been more widely published in hymn books than any other by Charles Wesley, and is one of the most beloved hymns in the English language. It gives such clear utterance in poetic form to the doctrines of the incarnation that the full meaning of the birth of Christ fairly sings its way into the hearts and memories of those who worship.

Fifty-second Sunday: Last Sabbath of the Old Year

"God be with you till we meet again" (41)

Jeremiah Eames Rankin, 1828-1904

DR. RANKIN, a native of New Hampshire and a graduate of Middlebury College, for many years held the pastorates successively of several prominent Congregational churches in New England and Washington, D. C., until 1889, when he became president of Howard University.

While pastor of a Congregational church in Washington, D. C., he became so impressed with the etymology of the farewell greeting, "good-by," which really means "God be with you," that he determined that a hymn should be wrought out of this beautiful idea. So he came to write "God be with you till we meet again."

When he had written the first stanza he sent it to two different composers, one quite famous, the other little known, each of whom wrote a tune for it. He chose the tune of the latter, W. G. Tomer, who was then teaching school in Washington. Dr. Rankin submitted it to his organist, J. W. Bishoff, a musical editor, and Bishoff approved of it, making certain changes in it. In the words of the author: "It was sung for the first time one evening in the First Congregational Church, in Washington, of which I was then the pastor and Mr. Bishoff the organist. I attributed its popularity in no little part to the music to which it is set. It was a wedding of words and music."

God himself alone knows how many, many times this hymn has been sung on parting by friends, who have never again met upon this earth. But no happier farewell can be uttered by Christians than the simple wish, "God be with you till we meet again."

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